

REMARKS / ARGUMENTS

Claims 1 - 13 and 15 remain pending. Claims 1, 2, 3 and 15 have been amended. Claim 14 has been cancelled. Claims 16 - 22 were withdrawn subject to a restriction requirement.

Claims 2 and 3 were objected to in that "being" needed to be replaced with "are" as noted by the examiner. Applicants have amended claims 2 and 3 as suggested and withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-15 were rejected as being obvious over Cavalli, US 6,524,515 B. Cavalli discloses to use a gauze layer (commercial woven glass or polyester fiber gauze) pre-impregnated with melamine or epoxy resin (see column 4 line 33 to column 5 line 43). These resins typically employ hardeners as a catalyst and are in a class of polymer commonly known as thermoset. The use of such thermoset materials increases the polymerization time dramatically, 3-15 minutes is reported by Cavalli. Applicants' invention using the thermoplastic material cuts the cure time from 4 minutes to about 0.5 to about 1.0 minute and there is no polymer cross linking of thermoplastic materials as is the case with thermoset materials as epoxy resins or melamine.

Applicants amended claims 1 and 15 to reflect the covering element is formed as a subassembly absent of thermosetting materials. The covering element has the inner layer of thermoplastic material bonded directly to the external decorative layer by having melted thermoplastic material penetrate pores of the external decorative layer as disclosed in paragraph [0031]. Melamine resins are combined with formaldehyde to produce a thermoset resin. The absence of epoxy resins or melamine resins of the thermoset type greatly reduces the time to form the assembly. This is neither taught nor suggested by Cavalli.

Applicants respectfully request the examiner to withdraw the rejections and allow the application to pass to issuance.

Respectfully submitted,

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